

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 176318
ORIGIN ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DOTE-00 EB-08 H-01 OMB-01 SPTA-02
COME-00 AID-05 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 L-03
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DRAFTED BY ARA/PAN:WMILLAN:CEH
APPROVED BY ARA/PAN:JCHAAH
ARA/ECP:DEDMINSTER (DRAFT)
DOT/FHWA:WMCKINDRICH (DRAFT)
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELTN, PN

SUBJECT: DARIEN GAP HIGHWAY

REF: DANIELS/MILLAN TELCON OF JULY 6, 1978

1. U.S. FUNDING FOR THE DARIEN GAP HIGHWAY APPEARS TO BE IN IMMINENT DANGER OF TOTAL DISAPPEARANCE. WITHIN THE LAST TEN DAYS, HOUSE-SENATE CONFEREES AGREED UNANIMOUSLY TO DELETE ALL 20 MILLION DOLLARS REQUESTED FOR THE U.S. SHARE IN FY79. THE 20 MILLION DOLLARS SUPPLEMENTAL FOR FY78 IS ALSO BELIEVED TO BE IN DANGER, WITH THE HOUSE AND SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEES SCHEDULED TO VOTE WITHIN THE WEEK. FHWA HAS ADVISED THE DESK INFORMALLY THAT, IF THE FY78 SUPPLEMENTAL IS LOST, ONLY ABOUT 700,000 DOLLARS WOULD REMAIN FROM PREVIOUSLY APPROPRIATED FUNDS: BARELY ENOUGH TO MEET CURRENT CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS AND CLOSE
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PAGE 02 STATE 176318

DOWN THE U.S. PARTICIPATION. MOST IF NOT ALL U.S. ENGINEERS COULD BE GONE WITHIN SIX MONTHS TO ONE YEAR.

2. DOT (ACTING FOR FHWA) HAS OPPOSED THIS POTENTIAL UNILATERAL TERMINATION OF U.S. PARTICIPATION IN DARIEN GAP, AND HAS DRAFTED A LETTER TO THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN. STATE HAD PREVIOUSLY WEIGHED IN WITH OMB, AND IT

IS PROBABLE THAT OTHER LETTERS WILL GO FORWARD DIRECTLY TO

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN REPRESENTING STATE'S POSITION.

3. GOP HAS ALREADY HEARD INFORMALLY ABOUT THE POSSIBLE
END TO U.S. FUNDING FROM THE FHWA ENGINEERS, AND THE DESK
WAS CONTACTED JULY 6 BY THE PANAMANIAN CHARGE, WHO RE-
PORTED THAT GOP WAS QUITE UPSET, AND FREELY PREDICTED A
PUBLIC REACTION IF THE APPROPRIATION IS FINALLY DEFEATED.
HE SAID ANAMA WOULD ASK FHWA FOR FORMAL NOTIFICATION OF
TERMINATION.

4. THIS INFORMATION PROVIDED FOR YOUR USE IN RESPONDING
TO GOP QUERIES. WE EMPHASIZE THAT NOTHING HAS BEEN SET-
TLED AS YET RE FY78 THOUGH A DECISION SHOULD BE AVAILABLE
WIT IN A RELATIVELY SHORT TIME. WILL ADVISE.
CHRISTOPHER

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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